

CHAPTER NO. 652

SENATE BILL NO. 2305

By McNally, Haynes

Substituted for: House Bill No. 2560

By Winningham, Coleman

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39, Chapter 17, Part 1, relative to false academic degrees.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 39, Chapter 17, Part 1, is amended by adding the following as a new, appropriately designated section:

39-17-112. (a) It is an offense for any person to knowingly issue, sell or manufacture a false academic degree. As used in this subsection, "person" includes any individual, corporation, firm, company, partnership or association.

(b) It is an offense for an individual to knowingly use or claim to have a false academic degree:

(1) To obtain employment;

(2) To obtain a promotion in employment; or

(3) To obtain admission to a college, university or other institution of higher learning.

(c) As used in this section, "false academic degree" shall mean any degree issued that meets one of the following criteria:

(1) Issued without requiring any student academic work;

(2) Issued based solely on the student's life experience or portfolio without requiring any post secondary work submitted to and evaluated by faculty with appropriate academic degrees from an institution that is:

(A) accredited by a regional accrediting agency or other accrediting agency recognized by the United States Department of Education; and

(B) authorized to operate in Tennessee pursuant to the provisions of Title 49, Chapter 7, Part 20, relative to the authorization of post secondary institutions, or is exempted from authorization by the provisions of Section 49-7-2004; or

(3) Issued using more than twenty-five percent (25%) of required credits based on the student's life experience or portfolio.

(d) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prohibit an otherwise properly accredited and authorized institution from issuing honorary degrees recognizing distinguished individuals for service to the state, an institution or community.

(e) A violation of subsection (a) is a Class A misdemeanor.

(f) A violation of subsection (b) is a Class C misdemeanor.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2004, the public welfare requiring it.

PASSED: May 3, 2004


JOHN S. WILDER
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE


JIMMY NAIFEH, SPEAKER
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROVED this 14th day of May 2004


PHIL BREDESEN, GOVERNOR